

App. No. 10/781465  
Office Action Dated December 15, 2005  
Amd. Dated April 14, 2005

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Claims 1-13 are amended.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) Sealing device  $[(1)]$  for a wheel hub group  $[(2)]$  connected to a differential device  $[(3)]$ , and provided with a rolling bearing  $[(9)]$ , the sealing device  $[(1)]$  being mounted in such a way as to protect the bearing  $[(9)]$  from a lubricating fluid for the lubrication of the differential  $[(3)]$ , the sealing device  $[(and)]$  comprising:

a first shield  $[(22)]$  which is integral with an outer race  $[(10)]$  of the bearing  $[(9)]$ ,

a second shield  $[(23)]$  which is integral with an inner race  $[(11)]$  of the bearing  $[(9)]$

and which faces the first shield  $[(22)]$ , and

a dynamic sealing element  $[(24)]$  which is interposed between the first and second shields  $(22, 23)$ ; ~~the sealing device~~  $(1)$

wherein the second shield  $[(23)]$  is arranged internally to the first shield  $[(22)]$  in relation to the bearing  $[(9)]$ , and comprises:

a support portion  $[(25)]$  which is made of metallic material and which is force fit onto the inner race,  $[(11)]$  and

an external portion  $[(26)]$  which is provided with a cylindrical encoder  $[(27)]$  which is integral with the support portion  $[(25)]$ ; and

wherein the first shield  $[(22)]$  comprising comprises:

a first cylindrical portion  $[(33)]$  which is made of metallic material and which is force fit onto the outer race  $[(10)]$  in a position which is at least coaxial to the encoder

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[(27)], and [which] is provided with at least one slit [(38)] ~~which is suitable~~ for being engaged by a sensor [(39)] for reading a signal ~~which is~~ generated by the encoder [(27)] ~~itself~~.

2. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 1, wherein the first shield [(22)] comprises a second cylindrical portion [(34)] which is made of metallic material, and which is integral with the first cylindrical portion [(33)] and which is radially arranged opposite the encoder [(27)] in relation to the first cylindrical portion [(33)] ~~itself~~.

3. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 2, wherein the first shield [(22)] comprises a lining [(41)] which is made of rubber material and which is arranged at least outside the first and second cylindrical portions (33, 34) and in such a way as to totally close the slit [(38)].

4. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 3, wherein the [said] lining [(41)] comprises a base baffle [(46)], which closes the [said] slit [(38)], and which separates and seals the encoder [(27)] from the outside of the device [(1)] ~~itself~~.

5. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 4, wherein [that] the [said] baffle [(46)] is suitable for being placed in contact with a reading surface [(39a)] of [a] the sensor [(39)] for monitoring [a] the signal ~~which is~~ generated by the [said] encoder [(27)].

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6. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim[[s]] 3, wherein the dynamic sealing element [[(24)]] is integral with the lining [[(41)]] and is also integral with the second cylindrical portion [[(34)]].
7. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 6, wherein the second cylindrical portion [[(34)]] comprises a support border [[(40)]] for the [[said]] dynamic sealing element [[(24)]]; the support border [[(40)]] being radially turned towards the inside.
8. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 7, wherein the first cylindrical portion [[(33)]] comprises two cylindrical bodies ~~(33a, 33b)~~ which have different diameters from each other, and a connecting annular body [[(33c)]] which connects the two cylindrical bodies ~~(33a, 33b)~~; a first cylindrical body [[(33a)]] of the [[said]] two cylindrical bodies ~~(33a, 33b)~~ being force fit onto the outer race [[(10)]] and defining with the annular body [[(33c)]] an edge [[(37)]] which is arranged in such a way as to abut the outer race [[(10)]].
9. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 8, wherein the [[said]] lining [[(41)]] comprises a static sealing element [[(47)]] which is arranged around the [[said]] edge [[(37)]] in order to create a static seal with a sealing housing [[(5)]] which extends from the differential [[(3)]] as far as the wheel hub group [[(2)]].
10. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 9, wherein the [[said]] static sealing element [[(47)]] is defined by a rounded edge with an external diameter which is greater than the diameter of the [[said]] first cylindrical body [[(33a)]].

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11. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 1, wherein the support portion ~~[[25]]~~ comprises an axially external border ~~[(32)]~~ which has a reduced diameter and which defines both an axial striker on the ~~[[said]]~~ inner race ~~[(11)]~~, and a static seal on a rolled blocking border ~~[(12)]~~ of the inner race ~~[(11)]~~ ~~itself~~.

12. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 11, wherein the ~~[[said]]~~ external support portion ~~[(26)]~~ comprises a cylindrical wall ~~[(28)]~~ which is integral with the encoder ~~[(27)]~~ and which is radially arranged towards the inside in relation to the encoder ~~[(27)]~~ ~~itself~~, and a substantially tapering wall ~~[(30)]~~ which is integral with the encoder ~~[(27)]~~ ~~itself~~.

13. (Currently Amended) Sealing device according to Claim 1, wherein it is mounted onto a wheel hub group ~~[(2)]~~ which is provided with an internal cylindrical passing housing ~~[(7)]~~ and closed on an external side by a sealing plug ~~[(8)]~~; the cylindrical housing ~~[(7)]~~ being suitable for being engaged in an axially sliding fashion by a terminal portion of an axle shaft ~~[(4)]~~ which projects from the ~~[[said]]~~ differential ~~[(3)]~~.